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LETTER DATED 14 JULY 1993 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF LEBANON TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

I have the honour to inform you that the Lebanese Government has decided to request the Security Council to extend the mandate of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), which expires on 31 July 1993, for a further period of six months, on the basis of the provisions of Security Council resolutions 425 (1978), 426 (1978), 501 (1982), 508 (1982) and 509 (1982) and of all other relevant resolutions and decisions of the Security Council.

The Government of Lebanon is pleased to report that, since the last renewal of UNIFIL, major positive developments have accelerated the establishment of national peace, stability and security. The Lebanese Army and internal security forces deployed throughout the country, with the exception of the Israeli-occupied area, are constantly being upgraded. Law and order are rigorously enforced and travel through the country is safe and unrestricted. These achievements have allowed the Government to focus on its reconstruction and development plans. The World Bank has approved a $175 million loan to Lebanon and many Governments and international and private financial institutions have committed themselves to the rehabilitation process. Concurrently, the Government of Lebanon is exerting great efforts to resettle thousands of civilians displaced by civil strife, two Israeli invasions and the sustained occupation of the south.

In addition, my Government is pleased to report that the command of UNIFIL and the Lebanese Army continue to coordinate in perfect harmony with the goal of deploying the latter throughout the south of the country up to its internationally recognized boundaries.

Despite the participation of Lebanon and Israel in the ongoing bilateral peace negotiations commenced in Madrid 20 months ago, Israel is continuing to perpetuate its occupation of the south irrespective of the significant achievements made by the people and Government of Lebanon to consolidate national unity and central authority. Israel's policies and practices regarding Lebanon have not changed and its military and proxy militia have continued unabated their brutal and arbitrary war against Lebanon's sovereignty, citizens and property.

The daily violence in southern Lebanon is the result of the continued Israeli occupation, which is against the will of the Lebanese people and the root of all problems between the two countries. As long as Israel continues its occupation, hostilities and bloodshed on Lebanese national soil will persist. As sanctioned by the Charter of the United Nations, the people of Lebanon will exercise their legal right of individual and collective resistance against occupation until Israel withdraws forthwith its forces from all Lebanese territory, as stated in Security Council resolution 425 (1978).

Lebanon is wholly committed to the peace process and to the achievement of a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the region. However, in spite of the ongoing negotiations, Israel refuses to implement resolution 425 (1978) and all other relevant resolutions. The latest of these is Security Council resolution 799 of 18 December 1992, calling for the immediate repatriation of 415 Palestinian civilians expelled to Lebanon in violation of the Charter and the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949.

The responsibility for the implementation of Security Council resolutions fall on the Council and, in particular, on its five permanent members. In view of the lack of any tangible progress in the peace talks and the threat Israel's continued intransigence poses to this process, it remains incumbent upon the Security Council to demonstrate that its resolutions are respected and implemented. Israel, as a State Member of the United Nations, cannot remain above the law and the Council must take action to guarantee the prompt implementation of its resolution 425 (1978) and the galvanization of its mechanism set out in resolution 426 (1978). This will enable the Lebanese Government to extend its authority over the entire south of the country up to its internationally recognized boundaries.

In this context, UNIFIL represents a valuable international commitment to Lebanon's sovereignty and civilian population in the occupied south. Its much-needed support and humanitarian assistance are playing an important role in the daily life of the civilian population. However, this assistance cannot be a substitute for the fulfilment of UNIFIL's original mandate as stipulated in Security Council resolution 425 (1978), which is to ensure the withdrawal of Israeli forces from Lebanon and to assist the Government of Lebanon in re-establishing its legitimate and effective authority in the area, through its Army and internal security forces.

The Lebanese Government takes this opportunity to pay tribute to the UNIFIL command, troops and administrators, and to the troop-contributing countries for their efforts and sacrifices in serving the cause of peace. It also expresses its deep appreciation for the tireless endeavours of the Secretary-General and his assistants, which are instrumental in the constructive presence and mission of UNIFIL in southern Lebanon.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Khalil MAKKAWI
Ambassador
Permanent Representative